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U.S.-Mideast Bjt 290, 2 takes total 530

By KENNETH J. FREED

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WASHINGTON AP - Israel's need for artillery shells and antitank ammunition will be met by the United States, but a decision was still being worked out today on sending planes and tanks.

The ammunition was being prepared for emergency transfer to Israel, according to Pentagon sources. Indications pointed to the shipments moving from remote bases in the United States, possibly on Israeli planes.

The situation involving new arms for Israel and other questions concerning the Middle East could be clarified today by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger. He scheduled his first news conference since the war started last Saturday.

Discussions continued into this morning at the White House, State Department and the Pentagon on the issue of providing major American arms to replace Israel's losses.

By late Thursday night, it was learned, the only action taken had been the drafting of contingency plans for transferring planes and tanks to Israel.

One such possibility involved moving U.S. Air Force F-4 Phantom jets to Israel from American bases in Europe. These would be replaced by planes being produced in the United States.

While these contingency plans awaited a final decision, preparations were made to send Israel tons of ammunition as a "quick fix" after it was determined the first six days of fighting had reduced stockpiles to serious but not extremely dangerous levels.

Some officials said sending the shells now also was a response to the continuing shipment of Russian equipment to Egypt and Syria.

It was hoped Moscow would realize that while Washington stands by the Jewish state, the limiting of supplies to ammunition indicated the Nixon administration did not want to open an arms race in the area.

The Soviets, Pentagon sources said, had flown at least 80 AN-12 Cub transport planes to Syria carrying antiaircraft missiles, antitank rockets and other arms.

The shipments to Egypt were fewer, the sources say.

Several factors were weighed by American officials concerning the critical question of providing new planes and tanks to Israel.

No official would discuss the matter publicly, but it was learned that some State Department policy makers had felt there was no need for any massive effort to replenish Israel.

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These officials are said to have felt that the military balance in the Middle East has not yet been upset.

Thursday's intelligence estimates in Washington indicated Israel had lost nearly 600 tanks. That was about a third of its tank force.

Israel's air losses were figured at about 75 planes, or 25 per cent of its jet fighters.

Intelligence sources set Syria's losses over six days as 650

tanks and 35. No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/29 : LOC-HAK-185-3-53-5 and a third of its combat fighters.